

Football SA Competition Operating Regulations

Summary of Key Changes – January 2025

Clause	Issue / Rationale	Current	Key change(s)
Various	Consolidate all Competition Operating Regulations for Men's, Women's and Youth competitions into one document to eliminate duplication of clauses and make it easier for teams / clubs to navigate competition requirements, including links (where applicable) to other relevant regulations or policies.	Separate Competition Operating Regulations for: 1. Men's 2. Women's and Girls'; and 3. Junior.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Removal of any duplicate clauses; 2. Removal of clauses related to Grievance / Disciplinary processes where applicable and retained clauses where necessary; 3. Removal of clauses relevant to Football SA Venue Policy and venue requirements where applicable and retained clauses where necessary; 4. Consolidated the relevant subheadings from each Regulation under a unified heading where applicable, while maintaining separate sections for the Cup Competition and Final Series.
2 - Definitions	Consolidated definitions of all Competition Operating Regulations to ensure language is clear and consistent throughout document.	Definitions in separate Competition Operating Regulations.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Removed duplicate definitions from different Competition Operating Regulations; 2. Expanded definitions to include additional necessary definitions; 3. Updated definitions throughout document to ensure consistency and use of defined terms where applicable.

Australia Cup	Football Australia have secured a naming right sponsor for the competition.	Naming of competition throughout the document 'Australia Cup'.	Update 'Australia Cup' to 'Hahn Australia Cup'.
Clause 4.17 - Promotion and Relegation	Merged the sub-headings of qualification and number of teams.	These elements were previously separated despite addressing similar content.	Consolidated these subheadings by unifying the sub-headings under the same heading of 'Promotion and Relegation'.
	Provisions relating to WNPL and WSL conflicted with the rule that 2 Teams can be promoted and 2 Teams relegated if FSA does not make determination on manner and number of Teams to be promoted / relegated each Season.	4.17.3: the Team that finishes top of WNPL and WSL is promoted if it meets the Minimum Competition Requirements, while the Team that comes last in the Competition will be relegated. The Team that finishes 9 th in the WNPL and 2 nd in the WSL will play-off for a position in the WNPL.	Clause 4.17.3 deleted to avoid confusion with rule in 4.17.1.
Clause 5.18 - Movement of Players	Update clause regarding movement of players to provide clearer understanding and application.	N/A.	

5.6 - Player Eligibility	Update clause regarding inability of Clubs to recruit more than 5 players from another team as this previously caused significant confusion with teams.	A club is not permitted to recruit more than five (5) players from another team that is affiliated with the Football SA competitions. If a club has recruited more than five (5) players from another team, they must demonstrate that there are exceptional circumstances for the Football SA to consider. Any decision will be at the discretion of the Football SA. This applies to all competitions.	Applies to Community and Youth Competitions only (per feedback from Football SA Competitions team).
Clause 5.17 – Football SA Academy squads	Limit total number of players that the Football SA Academy squads can map to its teams.	N/A	Included maximum total number of Players from Football SA Academy squads to 80 Players.
Clause 5.18 - Movement of Players	The Movement of Players rule for the WNPL has been challenging to administer and has led to confusion. Men's movement rule which is based on the 75-minute rule has been adopted.	Previously the Regulations used a Cap rule in that a WNPL or WSL1 Club may move a maximum of four (4) Players between the Senior Grade and Reserve Grade on any given round of Matches on the proviso that the four Players were named as Substitutes in the Senior Grade Match.	Women's movement of player rule aligned with Men's eligibility in that once a player has played in that higher grade on that round, the player shall become ineligible to play in a lower grade for their club in the same round of matches (including the final series), unless the 75-minute rule is satisfied.

	Young players (i.e. under 18) who are mapped to higher divisions due to their higher skill level should not play in Youth Competitions as it disadvantages other participants.	N/A	Underage Players who are mapped in WNPL Reserves, NPL Reserves, WSL Reserves, Under 18s, State League and Community Competitions are not permitted to move down and participate in the YCC.
Clause 6.2 – Non-attendance of a Match Official	Clarification around the roles of Clubs when appointing a Club appointed Match Official including tightening the payment period.	If an appointed Referee does not attend the match, the Home Club must inform Football SA within 48 hours of the scheduled fixture.	Additional clauses which ensure: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reduced from 48 hours to 24 hours to ensure payments are processed prior to Football SA being informed. 2. The home team must list the Club appointed match official within the Football SA Competition Management System as a non-accredited referee. 3. If a Club referee is appointed, they must ensure that both teams have submitted and confirmed the match sheets in the Competition Management System. No game should proceed until the match sheets have been confirmed.
Clause 6.3 – Coaches	Coaches must meet minimum accreditation requirements for each Competition.	Minimum coaching accreditation in each separate Competition Regulation.	Table updated to reflect minimum coaching accreditation required for each Competition.
Clause 7.6 – National Second Tier Competition	Eligibility of 2025 NPL Men's Premiers to enter FA National Second Tier Competition	N/A	Included guidance clauses from FA regarding eligibility of Team who is the 2025 NPL Men's Premiers to participate in the FA National Second Tier Competition
Clause 9	Low number of regional teams nominating to participate in the Australia Cup. Proposed to	N/A	Any team which nominates to participate from a regional Affiliated Association will automatically be

	mandate for Round 1 and 2 of the Australia Cup that a regional team will automatically host.		drawn as the Home Team for Rounds 1 and 2 of the Competition only. In the event two regional Teams are drawn against each other, the First Team drawn will be the home team and will host the match.
Clause 10 – Women’s Cup Competition	The Senior Elite and Community Women’s Cup Competition rules were previously difficult to distinguish, as their rules were interwoven and inconsistent across each competition.	The Senior Elite and Community Women’s Cup Competitions were governed by the same set of regulations.	While there is some overlap in common rules, this clause has been updated to include subheadings that specify additional provisions relevant to either the Elite or Community Women’s League. This approach ensures clarity while still retaining the rules applicable to both Cup Competitions.
Clause 10.3 – Eligibility of Players (Women’s Cup)	Youth Competition Players can move up and play for Club in higher age group or open age competition (Competition with no age restriction).	‘Open Age’ Competition not defined.	Included definition of ‘Open Age’ Competition.
11.4 - Trial games	Trials cannot commence until after end of the relevant season for Youth Competition.	Not mentioned which allows teams / clubs to hold trials before end of season.	Youth Competition rules updated so that they cannot commence trials until after end of the regular Season, as advised by Football SA annually.
Clause 12 – Penalties and Fines	The fine levels across the Men’s, Women’s, and Youth competitions were inconsistent, with differing monetary values assigned to the same fine level (e.g., a Level 2 fine in the Men’s competition had a different value than a Level 2 fine in the Women’s competition).	The varying fine levels across competitions made it confusing and difficult to determine the applicable fine amounts.	This clause, relating to the summary of fines and penalties, has been revised to standardise fine levels across all competitions – Men’s, Women’s, and Youth. There are now 9 consistent levels of fines applicable.

Clause 16 - Mandatory Match Suspension for Yellow Card offences.	<p>Clarify accumulation of yellow cards and mandatory suspension to minimise ongoing confusion from rule.</p>	<p>1. Player receives mandatory match suspension of 1 Match if they accumulate 5 yellow cards.</p> <p>Yellow card accumulation limit increases from 5 to 8 cards at the conclusion of round 18, which is confusing as there may be rounds that are washed out and then played after the fixtured round 18.</p>	<p>1. Consolidated all Mandatory Match Suspension provisions for Yellow Card Offences into the Disciplinary and Judicial Body Regulations, ensuring the content related to Disciplinary Regulations is maintained in a single section.</p> <p>2. A Player who receives 5 yellow cards is suspended for 1 Match, only if they were accumulated in community competitions i.e. if they get 4 in Community Matches and 1 in a non-Community Match, they are <u>not</u> suspended under this rule.</p> <p>Changed wording that yellow Card accumulation limit increases from 5 to 8 cards from "at the conclusion of round 18" to "after 18 rounds". If there are games that are postponed or washed out, there may be an occasion where an earlier round is played after Round 18. Eg, round 15 is washed out and played after round 18.</p>
Appendix A - Penalties and Fines	<p>Consolidated summary of penalties and fines from each separate Competition Operating Regulation and included this as an Appendix A to the Regulations so that it is easier to amend as required and navigate in document.</p>	<p>1. Penalties and fines in body of each Regulation, with some overlap with the FSA Grievance & Disciplinary Regulations</p> <p>Included references in each relevant clause which reference the fine/penalty in Appendix A.</p>	<p>Included consolidated penalties and fines in Appendix A of Regulations.</p>

Appendix B & C – Men’s and Women’s NPL Player Points System 2025	2024 version included.	2. 2024 PPS included.	Updated to include 2025 PPS.
Appendix H	Match Official Fees		Updated to 2025 Fees.